

Message Text

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TAGS: BEXP, SOPN, SGEN, PINT, GR

SUBJECT: GREEK RECEPTION OF PORT AND SHIPYARD TRADE MISSION

REF: ATHENS 2028

1. IN ADDITION TO PRELIMINARY RESULTS FOR GREECE REPORTED IN REFTEL, MISSION DIRECTOR AND MEMBERS RECEIVED UNUSUALLY WARM WELCOME FROM GOG OFFICIALS AND EXTENSIVE PRESS AND TELEVISION COVERAGE. WE BELIEVE THAT FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE OF GREEK OFFICIALS REFLECTS GENUINE DESIRE FOR INCREASED U.S. COMMERCIAL INVOLVEMENT BOTH

IN PORT AND SHIPYARD AREA AND IN GENERAL

2. TYPICAL OF GREEK OFFICIAL RESPONSE WAS OPENING SPEECH BY MERCHANT MARINE MINISTER ALEXANDROS PAPADHONGONAS AT SEMINAR WITH OFFICIALS OF FIVE MAJOR GREEK PORTS IN WHICH HE URGED INCREASED GREEK RELIANCE IN U.S. TECHNOLOGY. SIMILAR ATTITUDES WERE EXPRESSED TO MISSION DIRECTOR DOBBIN BY PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF GREEK SHIPOWNERS, THE ATHENS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE PIRAEUS PORT AUTHORITY, AS WELL AS BY SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE HELLENIC INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK (ETVA)

3. OF PARTICULAR NOTE WAS A CALL BY THE MISSION DIRECTOR ON PIRAEUS MAYOR ANASTASIOS VOULODIMOS IN WHICH THE LATTER FORMALLY REQUESTED DOBBIN TO TRANSMIT PROPOSAL ON BEHALF OF PIRAEUS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP WITH BALTIMORE. MAYOR VOULODIMOS STATED
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THAT SUCH A LINK WOULD BE NEW SYMBOL OF LONG-STANDING FRIENDSHIP

BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES AND WOULD HAVE SPECIFIC BASIS IN LARGE PORTS AND SHIPBUILDING AND REPAIR INDUSTRIES IN BOTH CITIES AND IN PRESENCE OF LARGE GREEK COMMUNITY IN BALTIMORE. DOBBIN AGRRED TO TRANSMIT REQUEST TO BALTIMORE MAYOR DON SHAEFFER, WHO IS PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE

4. MISSION RECEIVED HEAVY PRESS COVERAGE TOTALLING 23 SEPARATE ARTICLES IN ELEVEN DAILY NEWSPAPERS, TWO WEEKLIES, AND TWO MONTHLIES. TELEVISION COVERAGE WAS ALSO HEAVY WITH FOOTAGE ON BOTH NATIONAL NETWORKS OF THE OPENING OF THE PORT SEMINAR AND DOBBIN'S CALLS AT THE ATHENS AND PIRAEUS CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE KUBISCH

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